

**APPROVED**  
**MINUTES**  
**NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS**  
**REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE**  
**8<sup>th</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**FEBRUARY 24, 2016 – 3:30 P.M.**

**Cumulative Attendance**  
**May 2015 - April 2016**

<b><u>Members Present</u></b>	<b><u>Attendance</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	9	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair	P	9	0
Jessie Adderley	P	7	2
Leann Barber	P	8	0
Sonya Burrows	P	9	0
Ron Centamore	P	8	1
Alan Gabriel	P	6	2
Mickey Hinton	P	4	4
John Hooper (arr. 3:51)	P	8	2
Dylan Lagi	P	8	1
Steffen Lue	P	2	0
Dev Motwani	P	4	0
Jacqueline Reed (arr. 3:45)	P	5	1
Scott Strawbridge	P	9	0
John Wilkes	A	7	2

Currently there are 15 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

**Staff**

Jonathan Brown, Northwest CRA Manager  
Bob Wojcik, Planner III  
Mona Laventure, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**I. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

## **II. Approval of Minutes from December 16, 2015 Regular Meeting**

**Motion** made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Vice Chair Phillips, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **III. Discussion Items**

Chair Lucas recalled that at the December 2015 meeting, the Board voted to approve an amended CRA Plan which would be forwarded to the CRA Board and the City Commission. Once the amended CRA Plan is approved, a meeting will be held to amend the CRA budget accordingly and proceed with various initiatives. Since that time, however, the City has decided to reorganize, and the Board must review the By-Laws in accordance with this reorganization. Further amendment of the CRA Plan will be required at the Board's March 2016 meeting, after which time the City Commission will approve the document and a budget meeting will follow.

Mr. Strawbridge requested a reason for the delay in starting the second phase of the update process. Chair Lucas replied that the City Commission wished to ensure that Phase 1, which clarified what the CRA is able to do in accordance with the amended CRA Plan, was complete before moving forward. Mr. Brown recalled that Phase 1 was necessary in order to bring the CRA into compliance before beginning Phase 2. Mr. Strawbridge expressed concern that the CRA is running out of time to achieve many of its goals.

Mr. Brown emphasized that the CRA is now open for business, as Staff is meeting with developers and businesses who are interested in working in the area. Because the restructuring was unexpected, the By-Laws must be amended to make sure the CRA is on a secure foundation before proceeding. At the same time, other plans, including the CRA Plan amendment and various incentive programs, will continue and build on this secure foundation, with the ultimate result of quality redevelopment.

### **a. By-Laws Amendment – Draft**

Mr. Brown explained that the Mayor has asked that all the City's CRA advisory boards be provided with a draft of their By-Laws. The copy provided to the Board members is a draft of these By-Laws as they relate to items that went before the City Commission earlier in February. Another draft is being prepared and will be placed on the Agenda of the March 1, 2016 City Commission meeting, as well as emailed to the Board members.

Chair Lucas explained that the By-Laws will establish the new structure of the CRA Department. These changes address procurement, staffing, organizational structure, the role of the City Manager/CRA Executive Director, auditing, and area management.

The intent is to restructure the organization in a way that the CRA Board and Staff feel will make it more successful.

Mr. Gabriel pointed out that each of the three areas identified in the document should have its own separate budget. Mr. Brown clarified that when the City discusses its CRA, they are referring to a single CRA that includes three distinct areas. He confirmed that each of the three areas will have its own budget. Mr. Gabriel recommended modifying the document to make this clear.

Mr. Lagi advised that the By-Laws should allow the CRA Board to consider appointing either the City Manager or a member of City Staff as the CRA Executive Director. Mr. Brown explained that the CRA Board discussed this issue and elected to retain the City Manager as Executive Director at present. Mr. Brown stated that CRA Managers report to the CRA Board through the City Manager/CRA Executive Director.

Mr. Strawbridge stated he was concerned that this could result in the position of CRA Manager becoming a political office. He felt the influence of these officials could significantly change the dynamic of the CRA. Mr. Brown reiterated that this reporting is done through the Executive Director, and noted that no action can be taken that is not included in the CRA Plan. Elected officials do not oversee the day-to-day operations of the CRA. Mr. Centamore observed that the CRA is better served when its Area Managers report directly to the Executive Director.

Mr. Brown concluded that the final draft of the By-Laws will be emailed to the Board members once it has been approved for distribution by the City Commission.

#### **b. CRA Plan Amendment**

Mr. Brown noted that an amended CRA Plan has already been approved by the Board; however, there are some aspects of the amended Plan that he would like to see modified. He referred the members to p.44 of the document, which reflects amended language that would assist the Board in proceeding with more affordable housing programs.

Mr. Brown also pointed out that the census data included in the amended CRA Plan, with which Mr. Strawbridge had previously expressed concern, has been updated to include data from 2010. He concluded that the proposed amendment to the Plan would provide greater flexibility by addressing Code violations, health, and safety.

Mr. Gabriel requested additional information on the proposed change. Mr. Brown replied that the Owner-Occupied Residential Rehabilitation Program would provide funds that allow homeowners to correct Code violations or to address health and safety issues. If a Code violation or a health/safety concern is present, the CRA would have a basis for addressing the issue.

Ms. Barber asked how the CRA would work with individual homeowners. Mr. Brown explained that CRA Staff or Housing and Community Development Staff would work with homeowners to get them approved for the program. He noted that the target homeowners would be moderate- to middle-income households, as Housing and Community Development already targets low-income households.

Ms. Barber commented that it could be intrusive to put homeowners through the qualification process. Mr. Brown stated that the process is similar to a homeowner seeking a bank loan.

Ms. Reed requested clarification of the difference between CRA dollars and Housing and Community Development dollars for the Owner-Occupied Residential Rehabilitation Program. Mr. Brown replied that when HUD funds are used for this program, they must be used for low- and very low-income households, which means the portion of the workforce earning moderate incomes is missed by the program. He emphasized the importance of using CRA dollars where they are most needed.

Mr. Strawbridge asked for more information on how these funds would be used within the CRA district. He asserted that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program that exists throughout the City is not made available within the CRA, where it is not considered to be necessary due to tax increment financing (TIF) revenue. He concluded that CRA dollars are intended to help both low- and middle-income households, not one category while excluding the other.

Mr. Brown clarified that CDBG funds are being used within the CRA district, citing improvements on Sistrunk Boulevard as an example. Mr. Strawbridge advised that in some cases, CDBG funds have not been used in the CRA because of the availability of TIF revenue. He concluded that there should be greater transparency regarding the expenditure of funds within the CRA.

Mr. Brown explained that CDBG funds can only be used to assist low-income families or neighborhoods. This means they may only be used in targeted areas of the City, of which the Northwest is one of the areas of greatest need. He pointed out that CDBG funds were used to assist the Step Up program, among other efforts within the CRA.

Vice Chair Phillips suggested that it would be helpful for the Board to be able to see the CRA budget while discussing the proposed program. Ms. Burrows recommended that the Rehabilitation Program not exclude low-income households from the use of CRA funds.

Mr. Brown advised that striking through the low-income designation in the amended CRA Plan would not exclude these households; however, by retaining this designation,

the CRA would lose the ability to assist members of the workforce in moderate-income households as well.

**Motion** made by Mr. Gabriel, seconded by Vice Chair Phillips, to approve with the one change, changing "...to correct Code violations and to address health" to "...or to address health."

Mr. Strawbridge spoke in favor of removing the strike-through from the reference to low-income households. He felt this was counterproductive when the CRA Plan is intended to help these families. Mr. Brown advised that because the Housing Authority and the Housing and Community Development Department are already providing funds to the CRA, the program should not be limited to one income designation, but should be able to extend help to households with moderate incomes as well.

Mr. Brown continued that more changes will be forthcoming in Phase 2; however, the amended CRA Plan is sufficient to bring the CRA into compliance.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 13-1 (Mr. Strawbridge dissenting).

Chair Lucas requested that the March 2016 Board meeting include an initial discussion on the budget items amended in the CRA Plan.

### **c. Proposed CRA Incentives**

Mr. Brown advised that this was a discussion item regarding the incentive programs the Board would like to consider putting into place. He asked the members for their feedback on the types of programs they would like Staff to explore.

Mr. Strawbridge suggested a rental assistance program, recalling that a prior program required applicants to sign long-term leases in order to meet eligibility requirements, which led to some applicants going out of business before funds were approved. He asserted that if the CRA could help with rental costs, it would provide a cushion for applicants seeking to get started. He also recommended that funds be made accessible to applicants during the near term, such as within 90 days. Because gaining access to capital remains difficult for many new businesses, another possibility would be to provide a guarantee for the money loaned to applicants.

Mr. Brown noted that while guaranteeing funds could hold a good deal of risk, the CRA has begun working with a number of banks to begin a loan consortium, which would provide financing for residential infill and commercial projects. They would comprise a group of approved banks and nontraditional lenders for which the CRA could provide information to businesses considering relocation.

Ms. Burrows asked if there has been consideration of restructuring the façade program without its current reimbursement aspect, pointing out that many business owners do not have the funds to make improvements up front. Mr. Brown replied that this is under consideration, noting that Housing and Community Development does not reimburse owners but provides them with a list of approved contractors who can be paid directly.

Mr. Strawbridge proposed that the existing streetscape or facade programs could be modified so if a project is sold under certain circumstances or within a specific time frame, the applicant would have some obligation to repay these funds. He cited the example of a project that was provided with streetscape funds and then sold at significant profit. Mr. Brown added that another possible change would be requiring certain building and maintenance standards when CRA dollars are provided.

Mr. Gabriel recommended developing an incentive program to encourage developers to build on vacant lots and new owners to purchase housing there. Mr. Brown observed that most of the infill housing constructed in the City is currently occupied. He noted that this would require partnership between developers who build and agencies who find occupants for these properties. He concluded that Staff would bring back some of these ideas for further discussion at a subsequent meeting.

#### **d. Affordable Housing & Economic Analysis Study**

Mr. Brown advised that this is an informational item. The Department of Housing and Community Development has worked with Florida International University (FIU) to put together an affordable housing economic analysis for the City. The document includes demographic and socioeconomic information that is also reflected in the CRA Plan. The entire analysis can be emailed to members as well.

Mr. Strawbridge asked if the information would be incorporated into the amended CRA Plan. Mr. Brown explained that this analysis was performed separately from the CRA Plan and provides information that is pertinent to the CRA.

Ms. Barber commented that she did not find the information helpful, as it blended some of the individual neighborhoods and populations within the CRA. Mr. Brown replied that the information was compiled in this manner because it was based on census block groups. Ms. Barber also felt the information should be more indicative of trends within the community, such as home ownership in specific areas.

#### **IV. Communication to CRA Board**

None.

#### **V. Old / New Business**

Annemarie Sorrell, representing the Mosaic Group, provided handouts to the Board members, stating that since February 9, 2016, the newsletter and website have been updated and are in the process of being finalized. The website will be officially rolled out once the CRA Board has approved the Village District brand. The newsletter will be distributed to local businesses, neighborhoods, community stakeholders, and business partners throughout Fort Lauderdale.

The design of the Business Development Toolkit is now complete and can be rolled out once the brand has been approved. As incentives change, the page will be updated. The Toolkit will be available for Staff to present when inquiries are made about CRA services and programs.

The Mosaic Group is also working on several ideas to help launch the Fort Lauderdale Village District brand and incorporate all three communities, as well as the media and community stakeholders, in the effort. A brand launch, which would be a two-day community and family event, is also proposed for Historic Sistrunk. Mosaic has also met with the Progresso Village Civic Association and has updated its brand. A rebranding celebration, featuring neighborhood initiatives, is proposed for this community as well.

Ms. Sorrell continued that a proposed event calendar including brand launch dates and Small Business Week is also provided. Proposals include a food truck event and a CRA business recruitment event. Small Business Week would consist of three days, beginning with a Money Mixer kickoff party to focus on financing for businesses. Startup Weekend has been moved to November 2016 so it will be part of Global Entrepreneurship Month.

Once the new brands are in place, it will be easier to market the entire area; until then, Ms. Sorrell requested communication of when events are planned within Flagler Village. Mosaic is requesting an advertising budget that would allow them to digitally advertise these events by placing ads on social media sites. They also hope to place signage at locations in which CRA investments, such as building or façade improvements, are occurring.

Ms. Sorrell clarified that the Board approved Mosaic's branding efforts at the November 2015 meeting, after which they were expected to go before the CRA Board in January 2016. Mr. Brown explained that the brands are before the Board for final approval before they are sent on to the CRA Board.

Ms. Sorrell added that Mosaic will develop a sponsorship package for events such as Small Business Week, which will help offset some of the event's costs. Mr. Gabriel emphasized the importance of community events in creating positive exposure. Mr. Brown advised that it is necessary to tie these events back to the CRA Plan.

Vice Chair Phillips thanked the Board for their willingness to work together during a period of change, despite their diverse opinions and thoughts on some issues.

Mr. Strawbridge advised that a Community Real Estate Development (CRED) program affiliated with the University of South Florida will provide an intensive training program for community development professionals on Sistrunk Boulevard in summer 2016. The focus will be on building capacity for community developers. He advised that he would make information on the event available to Mr. Brown's office for distribution.

## **VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]